

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 085013

FOL REPEAT KABUL 2543 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ANKARA GENEVA
DTD 13 APR.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 2543

ANKARA FOR DEA

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, AF

SUBJECT: DISCUSSIONS OF WHITE HOUSE ASSISTANT CHARLES O'KEEFE
WHILE IN KABUL

1. SUMMARY. O'KEEFE VISIT TO KABUL WHICH BEGAN APRIL 9
PRESENTED USEFUL OPPORTUNITY TO HOLD AFGHAN FEET TO THE FIRE
REGARDING COMMITMENTS MADE NOVEMBER 1976 TO GET CONTROL OF OPIUM
POPPY PRODUCTION. AFGHANS ARE BACKSLIDING. THEY ARE BUMPING
HARD AGAINST THE POLITICAL AND POLICE REALITIES OF THE ENORMOUS
JOB THEY HAVE BEFORE THEM IN NANGARHAR PROVINCE, BUT THEY ARE
ALSO GENUINELY ANXIOUS TO HAVE U.S. SUGGESTIONS AND COOPERATION.
END SUMMARY.

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2. CHARLES O'KEEFE, ADVISOR TO WHITE HOUSE SPECIAL ASSISTANT
DR. PETER BOURNE, ARRIVED KABUL APRIL 9 TO CONFER WITH EMBASSY.
UNITED NATIONS AND GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN (GOA) OFFICIALS ON
THE CURRENT STATE OF AFGHAN NARCOTICS CONTROL AND COOPERATION IN
THESE EFFORTS AMONG THE U.S., UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES AND
AFGHANISTAN.

3. ONE THING IMMEDIATELY CLEAR -- THIS WAS ESPECIALLY APPARENT IN MR. O'KEEFE'S CONVERSATION WITH MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE WASEFI -- WAS THAT GOA TUTHORITIES ARE BUMPING AGAINST THE HARD REALITIES OF TRYING TO SUPPRESS OPIUM POPPY PRODUCTION IN THE TRIBAL AREAS OF NANGARHAR. BOTH WASEFI AND GOA NARCOTICS CO-ORDINATOR YAHYA MAROOFI DESCRIBED NOT JUST THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN FORCING SMALL FARMERS OF THE AREA OUT OF LUCRATIVE OPIUM GROWING (FOR WHICH THEY RECEIVE GENEROUS ADVANCES FROM BIG BUYERS), BUT OF THE PHYSICAL DANGER TO POLICE TROOPS GOING INTO THE AREA. WASEFI, A FORMER GOVERNOR OF NANGARHAR PROVINCE, ALLEGEDLY WAS THE TARGET OF SEVERAL ASSASSINATION EFFORTS WHILE SERVING IN JALALABAD FOR TRYING TO IMPOSE GOVERNMENT'S WILL IN THAT WILD AREA. (NOTE: SOME GROWING IS TAKING PLACE CLOSE TO SETTLED AREAS. GOA OFFICIALS CHOOSE TO OVERLOOK THIS.)

4. AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT GOA AUTHORITIES ARE WELL ALERTED TO UNITED STATES INTERESTS AND CONCERNS IN THIS FIELD. O'KEEFE USED HIS VISIT TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THIS ONCE AGAIN, AND IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE AMBASSADOR AND WAHEED ABDULLAH (MINISTER IN CHARGE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS) APRIL 10 WE LEANED HARD ON AFGHAN NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION UNDERTAKINGS AND OUR SENSE GOA HAS NOT LIVED UP TO THESE. ABDULLAH TRIED TO DEFLECT OUR STERN PRESENTATION WITH TALK OF "PAKISTANI TRAFFICKERS AND IRANIAN USERS", BUT HE ALSO CAME UP WITH A SUGGESTION WE THINK IS WORTH EXPANDING WITH THE NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TEAM ARRIVING HERE APRIL 17: THAT A MIXED U.S./GOA/UN COMMISSION BE ESTABLISHED IN KABUL TO DISCUSS NARCOTICS COOPERATION ON A REGULAR OR AD HOC BASIS. (COMMENT: WHILE WE SUPPORT THIS IDEA WE WANT TO KEEP IT AN AFGHAN IN-CONFIDENTIAL

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INITIATIVE, SINCE WE BELIEVE IT WILL BE GOA WHICH HAS BUREAUCRATIC PROBLEMS IN FIELDING A TEAM HOPEFULLY INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HEALTH, PLANNING, AGRICULTURE AND POSSIBLY INTERIOR. ALSO, WHEN WE MENTIONED POSSIBLE U.N. PARTICIPATION IN SUCH A BODY THE UNDP ACTING RESREP INDICATED INTEREST -- IF THE INVITATION COMES FROM GOA.)

5. IN DISCUSSION WITH MINISTER OF HEALTH OMAR O'KEEFE FOUND PREOCCUPATION WITH HEALTH NEEDS IN BADKHSAN PROVINCE, BUT WE ALSO BELIEVE OMAR WOULD CAREFULLY CONSIDER ANY DOMESTIC HEALTH RELATED PLAN THAT WOULD CROSS HIS DESK.

6. DESPITE CURRENT PESSIMISM IN GOA ABOUT ITS NEXT MOVE IN NANGARHAR, WE FOUND COMMITMENT TO "DOING SOMETHING" AND EAGERNESS TO EXPLORE WITH THE U.S. WAYS IN WHICH THE BEGINNING OF SOME KIND OF SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND.

ELIOT

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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